

# *The Michigan Association of Timbermen*

Testimony before House Transportation Committee - May 18, 2011

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and fellow committee members. My name is Brian Nelson and I am a logger from Cornell (near Escanaba) and current President of the Michigan Association of Timbermen (MAT). I am here today to voice our support of HB 4316 which would create an exemption for brakes on the slasher saw table. The slasher combination is a semi tractor pulling a mobile loader and saw table. The slasher combination is used in the processing of trees at the forest landing by using the loader to place delimbed trees in the bunk of the saw table where the slasher saw cuts them to length. The configuration consists of a typical 3 axle semi tractor weighing roughly 20,000 lbs, towing a mobile loader which has 3 axles weighing roughly 50,000 lbs. which tows a single axle slasher saw table weighing roughly 6000 to 8000 lbs. depending on the model. The configuration of the axle on the saw table is not conducive for the mounting of any type of brake. Also the saw table is connected to the mobile loader with a pin hitch, safety chains and 6-8 hydraulic hoses. In our opinion the current configuration is a safe combination and that brakes on the saw table would not be warranted because of the way it is coupled to the loader and its past safety record. Our insurance company could not document any insurance claims from accidents involving this combination. Recently a number of our members have been pulled over and ticketed by Motor Carrier Officers for having no brakes on the saw table. They have been told to park the combination or un hook the saw table and come back and move it with a pickup truck. Now if it's a safety issue- why is it not safe to pull a 6-8000 pound saw table with a 70,000 pound semi tractor and mobile loader combination but it is safe to pull it with an 8-10,000 pound pickup truck? The forest products industry is struggling enough as it is without the added burden of fines and the loss of production from being pulled over for moving a combination that has been moved safely in the lake states area for the past 30 plus years.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this issue.

Sincerely,

Brian Nelson  
President  
Michigan Association of Timbermen



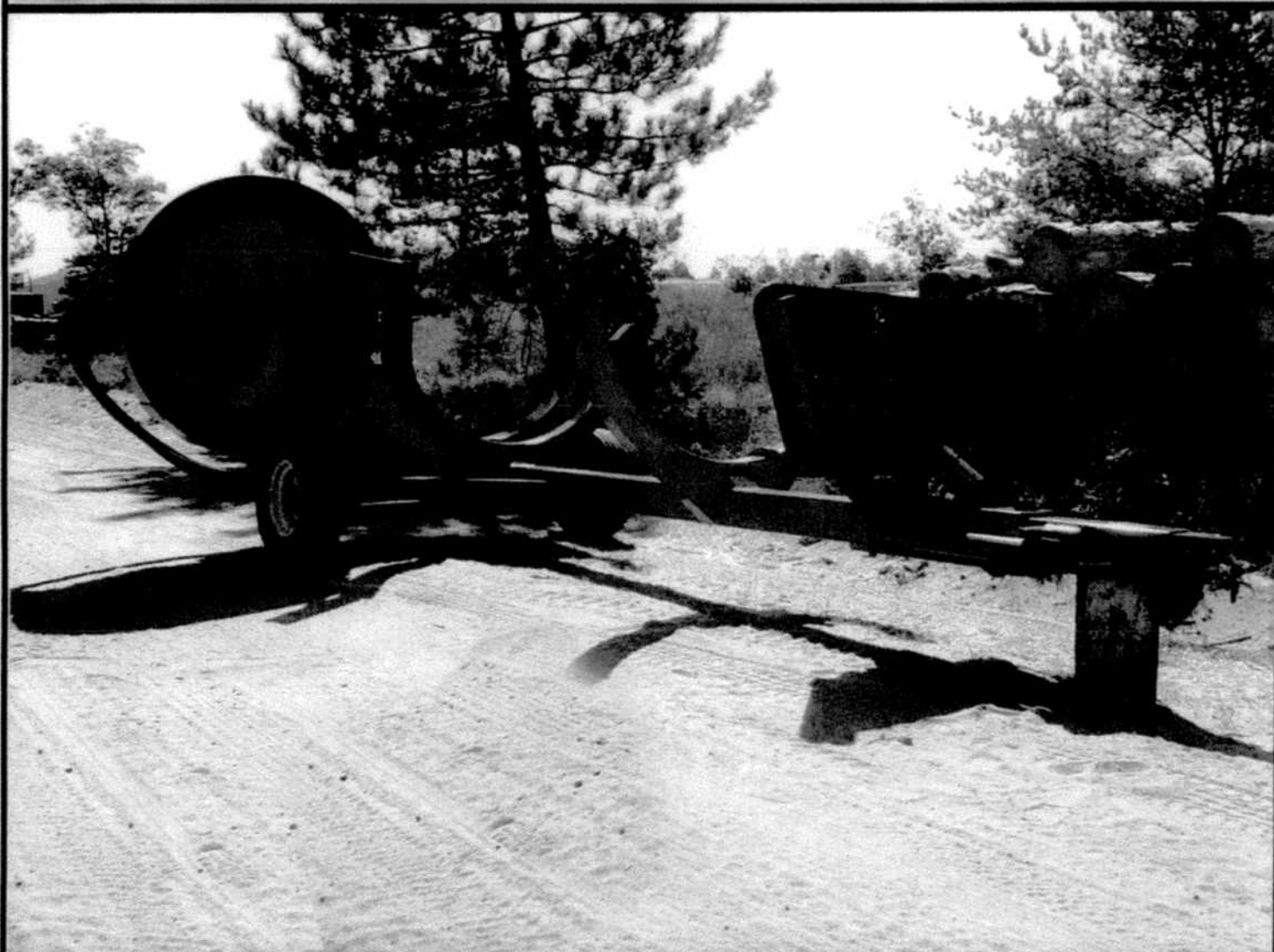


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